

TRIBUTE TO WEST VIRGINIA

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise on this special day to honor my home among the hills, the great state of West Virginia. It was on June 20, 1863 that West Virginia became the 35th state to enter the Union.

The Civil War changed the landscape of America, and nowhere was its impact felt more significantly than in the Virginias, which, like so many families fighting this bloody war, was rendered into two halves, west and east, North and South.

By some standards small in circumference but by any standards big in heart, West Virginia might have been born a child of national turmoil, but has grown to a State blessed with hard-working and generous people, awe-inspiring natural beauty, and a fount of natural resources.

The natural beauty surrounding us lures people from across the Nation and around the world to visit and play here.

Traditional industries have long played an integral role in our State's economy, and they continue so today.

Agriculture provides dairy, poultry, and feed crops for our State. The lumber industry makes use of our forests that cover 75 percent of our beautiful terrain.

And, we all know the coal industries motto in West Virginia, "Coal Keeps the Lights On."

West Virginia is also a leader in steel, glass, aluminum, chemical manufacturing, and natural gas industries.

And we will continue to support these traditional industries that have powered our Nation, and kept America running.

But, as the old saying goes "nothing endures but change." And we are seeing a change in West Virginia. West Virginia's Renaissance will be marked by West Virginia's foray into the technology industry.

On that front, we have only just begun, but today our future is as bright as an early summer morning sunrise over the Appalachian hills—hills that we are reminded of today by the gentle words of a classic tune that continues to strike a chord among all who have a "Home Among the Hills":

There's a land of rolling mountains
Where the sky is blue above.
And though I may roam, I hurry home,
To those friendly hills I love.
Where moonlit meadows ring
With the call of whippoorwills
Always you will find me in my home among
the hills
And where the sun draws rainbows in the
mist
Of waterfalls and mountain rills
My heart will be always in the West Virginia
Hills
There, autumn hillsides are bright with scar-
let trees
and in the spring, the robins sing
While apple blossoms whisper in the breeze
And there is music in the flashing streams
and joy in fields of daffodils
Laughter through the happy valleys of my
home among the hills
—Words & Music by E.W. James, Jr.

Today, and every day, West Virginians thank the Lord for our bountiful blessings, and bound together in loyalty and love for our fine

state remind ourselves that, yes, West Virginia is truly almost Heaven.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of World Refugee Day.

As chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I stand with my colleagues to articulate the importance of providing aid to refugees.

Today we call attention to the plight of refugees, celebrating their courage and resilience, and renewing our commitment to solving refugee problems.

Established in 2000 by the United Nations General Assembly, World Refugee Day is celebrated every June 20th. Previously commemorated as African Refugee Day, many countries and regions have held their own Refugee Days to help acknowledge the U.N.'s formal recognition of refugees in 1951. June 20th marks a day of global solidarity in an international effort to help refugees.

From Africa to Asia, the plight of refugees is not owned by one people or one country. Stemming from cultural, political and economic events, there are over 8.4 million refugees worldwide. Often uprooted from their homes and seeking safe haven in other countries, refugees find themselves in dire situations in need of aid and relief.

Founded as a nation of immigrants, we must recognize that many of our Nation's citizens are descendants of refugees or refugees themselves. From the potato famine in Ireland to the war in Vietnam, the U.S. has an established relationship of helping our global neighbors find refuge. While we debate comprehensive immigration reform, we must remember the contributions of refugees and be sure to include provisions to aid those displaced by situations they have no control over.

Additionally, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina has brought the issue of refugees to our own backyard. Many of those hard hit by Katrina were displaced from their homes, unsure of what to do. Lacking relief efforts and aid, our own citizens experienced the consequences of a situation they had no control over. Let us look to Katrina as an example of the course of action we must take in order for us to prevent situations where those in need are left in despair.

As a Nation, we must protect the basic human rights of refugees and ensure that they will not be returned involuntarily to a country where they face persecution. In addition to protecting human rights, we must do all that we can to provide foreign aid and assistance to nations that help refugees. Providing shelter, food, water and medical care in the immediate aftermath of any refugee exodus must be a priority.

Furthermore, as chair of the Congressional Ethiopia and Ethiopian American Caucus, I had the privilege of visiting Ethiopia and interacting with refugees. I saw first hand the cultural, political, and economic causes of their suffering. Now, more than ever, I believe that the U.S. should be the leader in the international effort to combat displacement.

Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly support World Refugee Day and ensuring that refugees across the globe receive the aid that they deserve. I urge my colleagues to join me to address this important issue.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF LA CROSSE, WI

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Boys and Girls Club of La Crosse, Wisconsin on its 40th anniversary of serving the people of western Wisconsin. For many years, it has provided a safe, positive environment that helps to foster values in children and young adults, establish strong relationships, and build good character.

As a young man, I benefited from the La Crosse Boys and Girls Club through my participation in their programs and, therefore, know firsthand the value of their work. Today, my two young boys, Matthew and Johnny, are involved in the club's activities, allowing me to see the benefits young men and women receive from the perspective of a grateful parent. Having served on the board of directors for the La Crosse Boys and Girls Club, I know the amount of time and hard work that goes into operating this organization.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank Terry Erickson, the current director of the La Crosse Boys and Girls Club, who has served since I was a participant. Terry has taken the club beyond its expectations. He has become synonymous with the club and a role model to everyone involved. I commend all the individuals whose leadership and dedication over the past 40 years have created an environment that has enhanced the lives of innumerable youths and their families. Thank you to the Boys and Girls Club of La Crosse for 40 wonderful years; I know you will continue to remain at the forefront of local youth development for many years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, the departure time for my flight from California was delayed 2 hours this morning, and I didn't arrive at Dulles International Airport until 5:16 p.m. Because votes were called at 5:00 p.m., it was unfortunately impossible for me to make today's votes.

However, I want you to know I would have recorded "yes" votes for all three bills on today's calendar. They included: H.R. 5540—Sergeant Jacob Dan Dones Post Office Designation Act, H.R. 5504—Larry Winn, Jr. Post Office Building Designation Act, H. Res. 826—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a National Youth Sports Week should be established.